

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SAN JO 01528 080913Z
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SNM-05 MMO-01 IO-13 L-03 /037 W
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R 071445Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0724

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAN JOSE 1528

STADIS//////////

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SNAR, CS
SUBJECT: ALLEGED STATE RESTRICTION OF DEA

REF: STATE 083084

1. TO THE EXTENT OF KNOWLEDGE OF CURRENT EMBASSY PERSONNEL,
NO PROPOSED DEA OPERATION HERE HAS BEEN VETOED SINCE SAN JOSE WAS
ESTABLISHED IN 1974.

2. ACTIONS TAKEN WHICH POSSIBLY COULD BE CONSTRUED BY DEA AS
"RESTRAINING" COULD INCLUDE:

A) IN 1976 EMBASSY DECLINED TO CONCUR IN DEA PROPOSAL TO
ESTABLISH INTERNATIONAL SSB STATION IN COSTA RICA (SEE FZN
JOSE 1484). EMBASSY DECISION APPARENTLY BASED ON JUDGEMENT
THE OPERATIONAL NEED FOR SUCH A STATION HAD NOT BEEN
ESTABLISHED.

B) IN 1976 AND 1977, DCM RECEIVED ORAL INQUIRY FROM DEA
SAIC AS TO WHETHER EMBASSY WOULD CONCUR IN PROPOSAL TO
INCREASE NUMBER OF AGENTS STATIONED SAN JOSE. SAIC EXPLAINED
THAT DIFFICULTY OF COVERING THREE COUNTRIES WITH TWO
AGENTS LED HIM TO BELIEVE THAT NUMBER OF AGENTS IN D.O.
SHOULD BE INCREASED. DCM REPLIED THAT IN VIEW OF LOW
LEVEL NARCOTICS ACTIVITY IN COSTA RICA, EMBASSY WOULD
HAVE NO BASIS TO CONCUR IN EXPANSION OF SAN JOSE D.O.
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HE INQUIRED INSTEAD OF POSSIBILITY THAT SEPARATE DEA
OFFICE BE ESTABLISHED IN TEGUCIGALPA WHERE THERE WAS
CONSIDERABLY HIGHER VOLUME OF NARCOTICS ACTIVITY.

C) STANDARD MISSION OPERATING PROCEDURE CALLS FOR
1) DEA SAIC TO MEET ROUTINELY WITH DCM (EMBASSY NARCOTICS
COORDINATOR) ON WEEKLY BASIS TO REVIEW WEEK'S ACTIVITY
ON NARCOTICS FRONT AND DISCUSS ANY PROBLEMS; 2) SAIC TO

OBTAIN PRIOR DCM CLEARANCE OF ANY OPERATIONS IN WHICH DEA PERSONNEL MAY HAVE DIRECT CONTACT WITH KNOWN OR SUSPECTED NARCOTICS TRAFFICKERS; 3) SAIC TO OBTAIN PRIOR DCM CLEARANCE WITH RESPECT TO ANY DEA OFFICIAL VISITOR TO COSTA RICA, INCLUDING TDY DEA AGENTS WORKING CASES UNDER ALIASES. ON OCCASION, WHEN NOT INAPPROPRIATE TO THEIR MISSION, DCM HAS REQUESTED MEETING WITH SUCH TDY AGENTS TO REVIEW GROUND RULES FOR OPERATING IN COSTA RICA AND TO OBTAIN ASSURANCES THAT DEA AGENTS WOULD NOT BE PHYSICALLY ON THE SCENE SHOULD ARRESTS TAKE PLACE HERE AS A RESULT OF THEIR CASEWORK; AND 4) SAIC TO ADVISE DCM IN ADVANCE OF PLANNED ABSENCES FROM COSTA RICA, ANNUAL LEAVE PLANS, ETC.

3. WITH RESPECT TO PARA 2(C) ABOVE, AT OUTSET OF HIS TOUR CURRENTLY-ASSIGNED SAIC SEEMED TO REGARD MISSION STANDARD OPERATING REQUIREMENTS AS RESTRICTIVE. WITH PASSAGE OF TIME, HE APPEARS TO RECOGNIZE THAT ROUGHLY SAME REQUIREMENTS ARE IMPOSED ON ALL USG AGENCIES IN COSTA RICA TO ENABLE AMBASSADOR AND SUPPORTING STAFF TO DISCHARGE OVERALL MANAGERIAL RESPONSIBILITIES IN THIS COUNTRY. AT THIS POINT SAIC DOES NOT OBJECT TO REQUIREMENTS NOR DOES HE REGARD THEM AS A RESTRICTION ON HIS OPERATIONS.

4. EMBASSY HAS SOUGHT CONSISTENTLY TO ASSURE DEA SAIC AND HIS REGION 15 SUPERVISORS OF EMBASSY SUPPORT OF DEA
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ROLE AND TO IMPRESS UPON GOCR THAT DEA ACTIVITIES ARE IN PURSUIT OF OVERALL USG ANTI-NARCOTICS GOALS. WHEN SAIC ARRIVED IN COUNTRY, CHARGE PRESENTED HIM TO MINISTER OF PUBLIC SECURITY AND REQUESTED MINISTER'S FULL COOPERATION AND SUPPORT. CHARGE ALSO MET WITH DIRECTOR OF GOCR NARCOTICS BUREAU AT SAME TIME TO STRESS IMPORTANCE EMBASSY ATTACHED TO DEA ROLE IN COSTA RICA. ALSO, WEEKLY MEETINGS BETWEEN DCM AND SAIC HAVE PROVIDED OPPORTUNITY FOR DCM TO COUNSEL AND ADVISE SAIC ON RESOLUTION OF SPECIFIC PROBLEMS LATTER HAS ENCOUNTERED IN DAY-TO-DAY LIAISON WITH GOCR OFFICIALS. FINALLY, WITH INTENTION OF HELPING SAIC TO DEVELOP GOOD WORKING RELATIONSHIP WITH OFFICIALS OF NEW ADMINISTRATION, EMBOFF RECENTLY ARRANGED MEETING OF MINISTER OF PUBLIC SECURITY-DESIGNATE WITH SAIC AND BETWEEN SAIC AND NARCOTIC BUREAU DIRECTOR-DESIGNATE.
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